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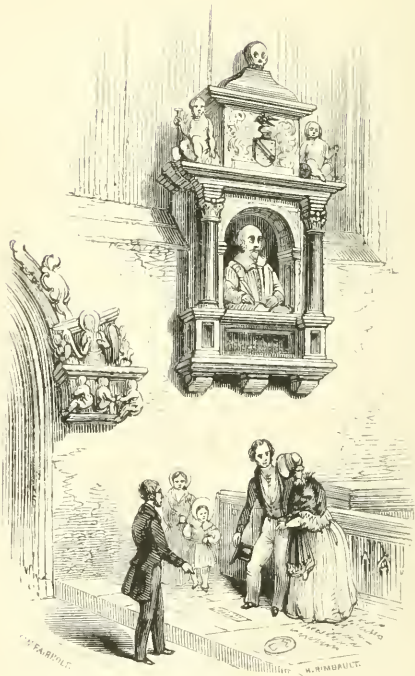




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THE TOMB OF SHAKSFERE.

THE
HOME OF SHAKSPERE

Illustrated and Described.

BY F. W. FAIRHOLT, F.S.A.

AUTHOR OF "COSTUME IN ENGLAND," &c.

Thirty-Three Engravings.




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1847

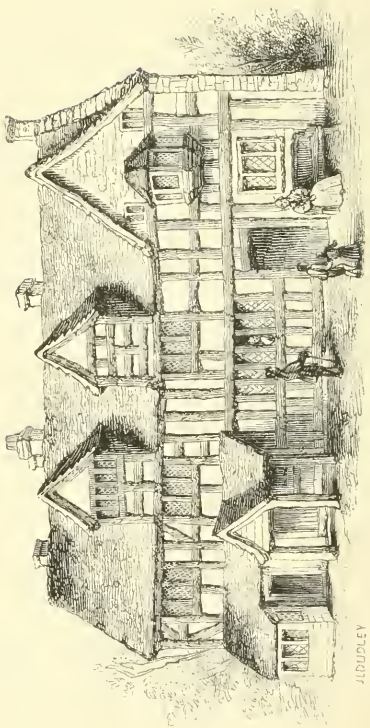
THE HOME OF SHAKSPERE.

LL that is known with any degree of certainty concerning Shakspeare is — that he was born at Stratford-upon-Avon — married and had children there — went to London, where he commenced actor, and wrote poems and plays — returned to Stratford, made his will, died, and was buried. Such is the concise biography of our greatest poet, as given by Steevens; and although volumes have been written, more or less conjectural, on his life and times, they scarcely add a single fact to the meagre list of ordinary events he has enumerated. Slight, however, as these notices are, they invest the humble town of Stratford-on-Avon with an interest which it would not otherwise possess. It was peculiarly *the home of Shakspeare*: here he was born; here he passed his early youth; here he courted and won Anne Hathaway; here he sought that retirement which the avocations of his London career would occasionally allow him to indulge in; and here, when in riper age he had won honours and fortune in the great capital, he chose to return, and pass the latter days of a life where he had first seen the light: at Stratford he died and was buried. “From the birthplace of Shakspeare,” says Washington Irving, “a few paces brought me to his grave.” All that connects itself with the personal history of “the world’s poet” at Stratford is thus almost as closely con-

densed as are the few words quoted above, which form his biography. A day at Stratford affords ample time to visit all these places; they lie so close, that a few minutes' walk only separates them. In these days of change, when the birthplace of the Poet is scarcely safe, and Stratford is threatened with the spoliation of what little remains to it, it must be a work of interest to record and picture the few relics connected with the Bard of Avon, the more particularly as alterations are continually taking place there; which, if they do not destroy, do at least change the aspect of much that is interesting to all lovers of the poet, and "their name is legion." We will therefore conduct the reader over Stratford and its neighbourhood, minutely describing all that at present exists, and enumerating what has passed away, commencing our journey at

SHAKSPERE'S BIRTHPLACE.

The house in Henley Street, as it at present exists, is but a fragment of the original building as purchased by John Shakspeare, the Poet's father, in 1574, ten years exactly after the birth of his son William, the entry of whose baptism is dated in the parish register, April 26, 1564. John Shakspeare had purchased in 1555 a copyhold house in Henley Street, but this was not the house now shewn as the Poet's birthplace; he had also another copyhold residence in Greenhill Street, and some property at Ingon, a mile and a quarter from Stratford, on the road to Warwick. From these circumstances a *modern* doubt has been cast on the truthfulness of the tradition which assigns the house in Henley Street to be the Poet's birthplace. Mr. Knight says: "William Shakspeare, then, might have been born at either of his father's copyhold houses in Greenhill Street or in Henley Street; he might have been born at Ingon, or his father might have occupied one of the two freehold houses in Henley Street at the

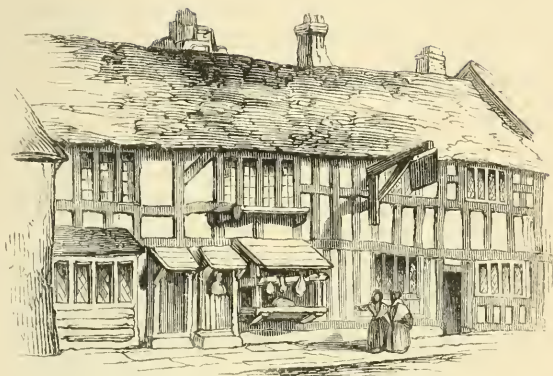


SHAKSPERE'S BIRTHPLACE. 1769.

time of the birth of his eldest son. Tradition says that William Shakspeare *was* born in one of these houses; tradition points out the very room in which he was born. *Let us not disturb the belief.*" A wise conclusion! Antiquarian credulity has given place to an extreme degree of scepticism; and from believing too much, we are now too much given to believe too little: add to this the anxiety which many evince to write about Shakspeare, although little else but conjecture in its vaguest form be the result; and the value of the modern conjecture as opposed to the ancient tradition may very readily be estimated. Let Stratford ever sacredly preserve the venerable structure with which she is entrusted; pilgrims from all climes have felt a glow of enthusiasm beneath the humble roof in Henley Street. Let no rude pen destroy such heart-homage, or seek to deprive us of the little we possess connected with our immortal countryman!

When John Shakspeare purchased this house from Edmund Hall for forty pounds, it was described in the legal documents as two messuages, two gardens, and two orchards, with their appurtenances. It passed at his death to his son William, and from him to his sister Joan Hart, who was residing there in 1639, and probably until her death in 1646. Throughout the Poet's life the house is thus intimately connected with him. Its original features may be seen in our first view, which was taken in 1769. It was a large building, the timbers of substantial oak, the walls filled in with plaster. The dormer windows and gable, the deep porch, the projecting parlour, and bay window, all contribute to render it exceedingly picturesque. The division of the house into two tenements is here very visible. The changes it has undergone since this view was taken, and which has reduced the original building to a mere fragment, will be best understood by a glance at our next two views. In 1792, when Ireland visited the house, it exhibited the appearance given in the upper portion

of our third plate. The dormer windows and gable had been removed; the bay window beneath the gable had given place to an ordinary flat lattice-window of four lights; the porch in front of that portion of the building in which Shakspeare was born was removed, and a butcher's shop-front constructed. At this time there lived here a descendant of Joan Hart, sister to the Poet, who pursued the humble occupation of a butcher. The other half of the house was at this time converted into an inn, and ultimately sunk into a low public-house. It had been known as the Maidenhead Inn in 1642; and when, in 1806, the house was disposed of to Mr. Thomas Court, who became "mine host" thereof, he combined that name with the one it then held of *the Swan*. About 1820, excited by a desire for "improvement," he destroyed the original appearance of this portion of the building by constructing a new red-brick front, exactly of the approved fashion in which rows of houses are built in small towns, and which consists generally of an alternate door and window, repeated at regular intervals below, while a monotonous range of windows above effectually repulses attention. This brings us to its present aspect, delineated in the lower cut of Plate 3. The house is now divided into three tenements; the central one is the portion set apart for exhibition, in the back rooms of which live the proprietors; the shop, the room above, and the kitchen, are sacred to visitors. When the lower part of the central tenement was made to serve for a butcher's shop, its window was removed, and has not been replaced; and when the butcher's trade ceased, a few years since, no attempt at restoration was made, and the shop still retains the signs of its late occupation. The old window in the upper story, originally a lattice of three lights, had been altered into one of four; and modern squares of glass usurped the place of the old leaded diamond-panes. A board for flower-pots was erected in front of the window; but more recently a large, obtrusive, rudely-painted sign-board pro-

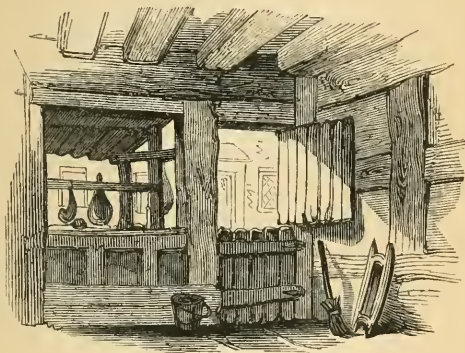


SHAKSPERE'S BIRTHPLACE, 1792.



SHAKSPERE'S BIRTHPLACE, 1847.

jects from the front to tell us "the immortal Shakspeare was born in this house." Such is its present external aspect: "it is a small, mean-looking edifice," says Irving; it was not so in Shakspeare's time.



Ascending the step, we pass into the shop. The door is divided into a hatch, and we look back into the street above the lower half, and through the open window of the shop, with its projecting stall for meat, and its wooden roof above. The walls of this room are of plaster, and the solid oak beams rest on the stone foundation. On entering, the visitor looks towards the kitchen, through the open door communicating with the shop. On the right is a roomy fireplace, the sides built of brick, and having the chimney-piece above cut with a low-pointed arch out of a massive beam of oak. To the left of the door is a projection in the wall, which forms a recess or "bacon cupboard," the door of which opens in the side of the kitchen chimney of the adjoining room. The floor is covered with flag-stones, broken into fifty varied shapes; the

roof displays the bare timbers upon which the upper story rests.

A raised step leads from the shop to the kitchen; it is a small square room, with a stone floor and a roof of massive timbers. A door opposite the shop leads to an inner room, inhabited by the person who shews the house. The fireplace here is large and roomy, the mantel-tree a solid beam of oak. Within the fireplace, on one side, is a hatch, opening to the "bacon cupboard" already spoken of; on the opposite side, is a small arched recess for a chair: here often sat John Shakspeare; and here his young son William passed his earliest days. Ireland compares the kitchen to the subjects which "so frequently employed the rare talents of Ostade. In the corner of the chimney stood an old oak chair, which had for a number of years received nearly as many adorers as the celebrated shrine of the Lady of Loretto. This relic was purchased in July 1790 by the Princess Czartoryska, who made a journey to this place, in order to obtain intelligence relative to Shakspeare; and being told he had often sat in this chair, she placed herself in it, and expressed an ardent wish to become a purchaser; but being informed that it was not to be sold at any price, she left a handsome gratuity to old Mrs. Harte, and left the place with apparent regret. About four months after, the anxiety of the princess could no longer be withheld, and her secretary was despatched express, as the fit agent, to purchase this treasure at any rate: the sum of twenty guineas was the price fixed on, and the secretary and chair, with a proper certificate of its authenticity on stamped paper, set off in a chaise for London."

With that anxiety to supply relic-hunters who visit Stratford, and who sometimes feel disappointed with the little which remains there connected with the Poet, the absence of the *genuine* chair was not long felt. A very old chair is still in the place; and Washington Irving thus speaks of the chair he saw in 1820:



SHAKSPERE'S BIRTHPLACE—INTERIOR OF THE SHOP.



SHAKSPERE'S BIRTHPLACE—THE KITCHEN.

“The most favourite object of curiosity, however, is Shakspeare’s chair. It stands in the chimney-nook of a small gloomy chamber, just behind what was his father’s shop. Here he may many a time have sat when a boy, watching the slowly-revolving spit with all the longing of an urchin; or of an evening, listening to the crones and gossips of Stratford, dealing forth churchyard tales and legendary anecdotes of the troublesome times of England. In this chair it is the custom for every one that visits the house to sit: whether this is done with the hope of imbibing any of the inspiration of the bard I am at a loss to say; I merely mention the fact; and mine hostess privately assured me, that though built of solid oak, such was the present zeal of devotees, that the chair had to be new-bottomed at least once in three years. It is worthy of notice also, in the history of this extraordinary chair, that it partakes something of the volatile nature of the Santa Casa of Loretto, or the flying chair of the Arabian enchanter; for though sold some years since to a northern princess, yet, strange to tell, it has found its way back again to the old chimney-corner.”

Of the sort of Shaksperian relics exhibited in the house at this time he gives an amusing list. “There was the shattered stock of the very matchlock with which Shakspeare shot the deer, on his poaching exploit; there, too, was his tobacco-box, which proves that he was a rival smoker of Sir Walter Raleigh; the sword also with which he played Hamlet; and the identical lanthorn with which Friar Laurence discovered Romeo and Juliet. There was an ample supply also of Shakspeare’s mulberry-tree, which seems to have as extraordinary powers of self-multiplication as the wood of the true cross, of which there is enough extant to build a ship of the line.”

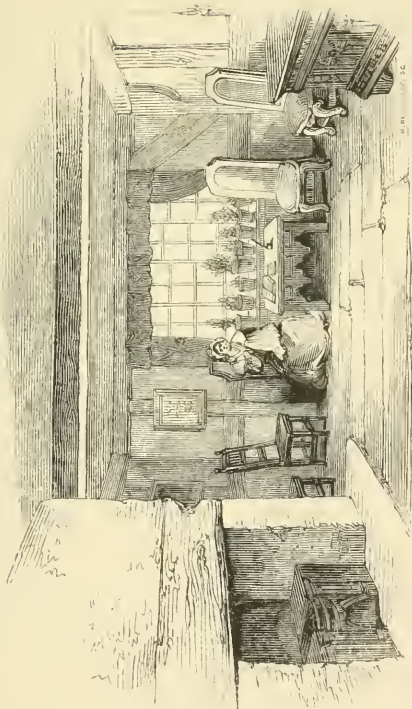
Opposite the fireplace in the kitchen is a window, and beside this is the stair which leads into the room in which the Poet was born. It is a low-roofed apartment, receiving its only

light from the large window in front. The same huge beams project from the plastered walls, one of considerable solidity crossing the ceiling. The fireplace projects close to the door which leads into the room; an immense beam of oak forms the mantel-tree; a large piece is cut out of one corner, the work of an enthusiastic young lady—so said the late proprietress, who declares that she was kept in conversation below by the lady's female friend while the act was done. She told many similar stories of Shaksperian enthusiasm, and never left the room or lost sight of any one after this daring trick. To be permitted to sleep a night in the room, she stated, was a very ordinary request made to her, which she occasionally gratified; while such fits of enthusiasm as bursting into tears, or falling down and kissing the floor, were ordinary matters, scarcely worth her noticing.

Of the old furniture in this room, and that throughout the house, it may be hardly necessary to remark, that it has no absolute connexion with Shakspeare. A portrait of Shakspeare, on panel, a poor performance, was brought from the White Lion Inn, a few doors from this house.

In this room the visitor, if he pleases, may sign his name in the book kept for that purpose. About 1815, the conductors of the public library at Stratford gave to Mrs. Hornby, the then proprietress of the house, a book for that purpose, the walls and windows having been covered before. Among many hundreds of names of persons of all grades and countries, occur those of Byron, Scott, and Washington Irving, the latter three times. Many are accompanied by expressions of feeling, others by stanzas and attempts at poetry, which have been thus commented upon by one among the number:—

“ Ah Shakspeare, when we read the votive scrawls
With which well-meaning folks deface these walls;



ROOM IN WHICH SHAKSPERE WAS BORN.

And while we seek in vain some lucky hit,
Amidst the lines whose nonsense nonsense smothers,—
We find, unlike thy Falstaff in his wit,
Thou art not here the cause of wit in others.”

The most curious feature of the room is the myriad of pencilled and inked autographs which cover walls, windows, and ceiling, and which cross and recross each other occasionally, so closely written, and so continuous, that it gives the walls the appearance of being covered with fine spider-web. Irving, speaking of the house, says: “The walls of its squalid chambers are covered with names and inscriptions in every language, by pilgrims of all nations, ranks, and conditions, from the prince to the peasant, and present a simple but striking instance of the spontaneous and universal homage of mankind to the great Poet of Nature.” Books for the entry of names are now kept.

In the adjoining public-house, when Ireland visited it in 1792, was a square of glass upon which was painted the arms of the Merchants of the Wool Staple, which he considered to be conclusive evidence of the trade of Shakspeare's father, who by some authors was said to have been a dealer in wool. Aubrey assures us he was a butcher. Mr. Knight has clearly pointed out the likely origin of both stories, in the custom of landed proprietors, like John Shakspeare, selling their own cattle and wool. The glass was brought here from the Guild Chapel! It therefore has no connexion with Shakspeare.

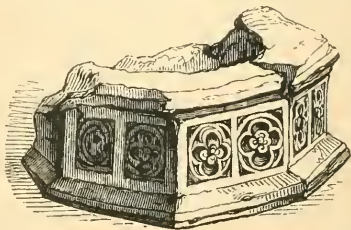
In a lower room of the public-house, Ireland also saw “a curious ancient monument over the chimney, relieved in plaster, which from the date, 1606, that was originally marked on it, was probably put up at the time, and possibly by the Poet himself. In 1759 it was repaired and painted in a variety of colours by the old Mr. Thomas Harte before-mentioned.” Upon the scroll over the figures was inscribed, ‘Samuel xvii. A.D. 1606;’ and

round the border, in a "continuous line, was this stanza in black letter :—

' Golith coms with sword and spear,
And David with a sling;
Although Golith rage and swear,
Down David doth him bring.' "



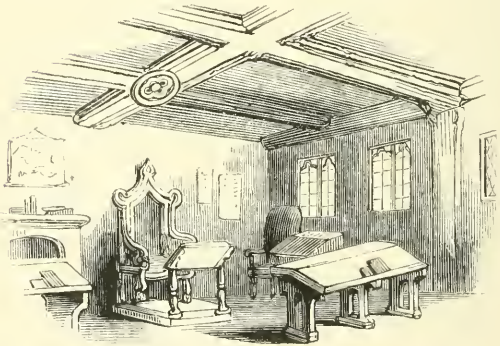
We copy Ireland's engraving of this solitary fragment of the internal decoration of Shakspeare's house; although we much question the propriety of imagining the possibility of Shakspeare placing such ludicrous doggrel there. The house was at that time in the occupation of his sister; and she most probably resided in the other half of this then large tenement. So that neither may have been guilty of it. The bas-relief was carried away some years ago by the proprietor of the inn.



The font in which the Poet was christened is here engraved.



EXTERIOR OF THE GRAMMAR-SCHOOL.



INTERIOR — THE MATHEMATICAL SCHOOL.

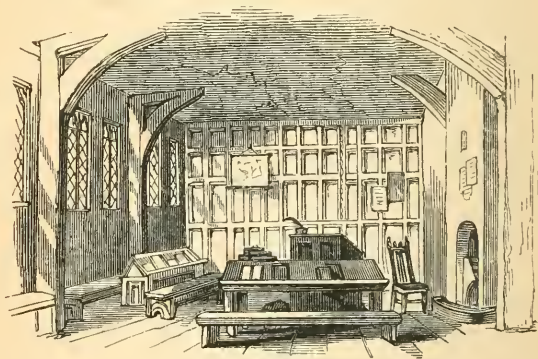
It is but a fragment, the upper portion only. The same style was adopted with singular good taste for the new font in the church, which may therefore be considered as a restoration of it. Mr. Knight has thus given its history: "The parochial accounts of Stratford shew that about the middle of the seventeenth century a new font was set up. The beautiful relic of an older time, from which William Shakspeare had received the baptismal water, was, after many years, found in the old charnel-house. When that was pulled down it was kicked into the churchyard, and half a century ago was removed by the parish-clerk to form the trough of a pump at his cottage. Of the parish-clerk it was bought by the late Captain Saunders; and from his possession came into that of the present owner, Mr. Heritage, a builder at Stratford." It is still in his possession. The font shewn at the Shakspeare Arms is reported to have been brought from the neighbouring church of Bidford.

From the house where Shakspeare was born to the place where he obtained his "small Latin and less Greek," is but a short distance.

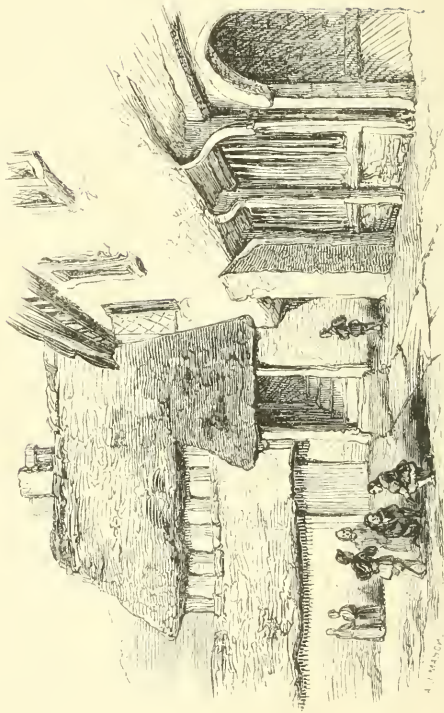
THE GRAMMAR SCHOOL

is situated in the High Street, beside the Chapel of the Guild, or of the Holy Cross, a good specimen of the ecclesiastical architecture of the reign of Henry VII.; and the interior of which was originally decorated with a series of remarkable paintings; the principal being the legendary history of the Holy Cross. In this chapel, at one time, the school was held; and an order in the corporation books, dated February 1594, directs "that there shall be no school kept in the chapel from this time following." The occupation of the chapel as a school may have been but a temporary thing; but Shakspeare may have imbibed some portion of his learning within its walls.

The foundation of the Grammar School took place in the reign of Edward IV. In 1482, Thomas Jolyffe gave certain lands and tenements to the Guild of the Holy Cross, to maintain "a priest fit and able in knowledge to teach grammar freely to all scholars coming to the school in the said town to him, taking nothing of the scholars for their teaching." On the dissolution of the guild, Edward VI., in the seventh year of his reign, ordered that "the free grammar school for the instruction and education of boys and youth there, should be thereafter kept up and maintained as heretofore it used to be."

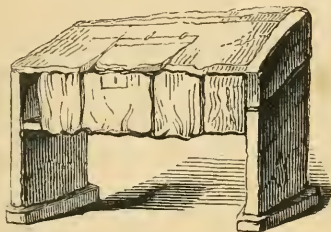


The Latin schoolroom is situated over the old Guildhall, and is that portion of the building nearest the chapel. It is a perfectly plain room, with a low plaster ceiling; but from the massive beams at the sides of the room, and those above the modern plaster, to which the struts from the side beams form a support, as well as from the external appearance of the deeply-pitched roof, there can be little doubt that an open timber roof



COURT-YARD OF THE GRAMMAR-SCHOOL.

originally decorated this apartment. The Mathematical school-room beside it has a flat roof, crossed by two beams of the Tudor era; and in the centre of the roof, where they meet each other, is a circular ornament or boss. The school has been recently repaired, and it has entirely lost its look of antiquity. A few years ago there were many very old desks and forms there; and one among them was termed Shakspeare's desk. It is now kept below. We engrave a representation of



it. The tradition which assigned it to Shakspeare may be very questionable: its being the oldest and in the worst condition may have been the reason for such an appropriation. The boys of the school very generally carried away some portion of it as a memento, and the relic-hunters frequently behaved as boyishly, so that a great portion of the old wood has been abstracted.

The court-yard of the school presented many features of interest; but the hand of modern "improvement" has swept them away. On a visit to Stratford eight years ago, the author obtained the sketch engraved opposite. The schools were at that time approached by an antique external stair, roofed with tile, and up which the boys had ascended from the time of Shakspeare. This characteristic feature has passed away; its only record is the cut now given; the court-yard has been subdivided and

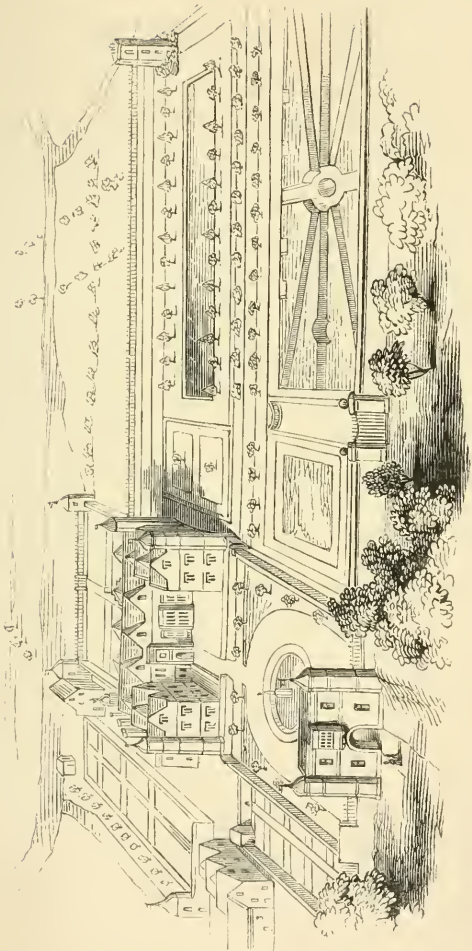
walled; and the original character of this portion of the building has departed for ever.

For the mementoes of Shakspeare's later life, we must look in the neighbourhood of Stratford. Tradition assigns adventures and visits to many places in its vicinity; but the most important locality with which his name is connected is the Park of Sir Thomas Lucy at

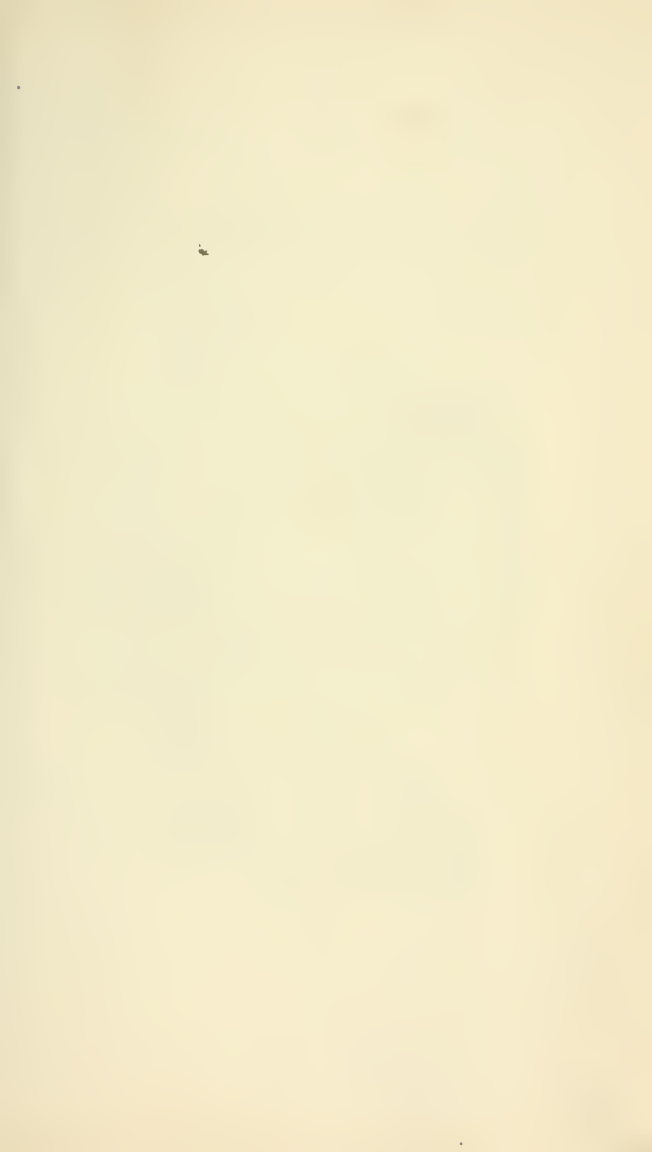
CHARLECOTE.

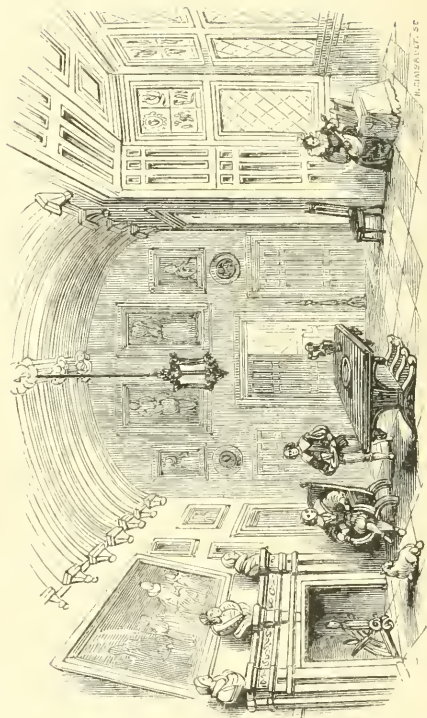
This was the scene of his deer-stealing adventures, which led, says tradition, to his quarrel with Sir Thomas, to a lampoon by the Poet, which occasioned him to leave Stratford for London in greater haste than he wished, and produced his connexion with the theatres. Of these tales, we must speak farther on. But first let us say a few words on this ancient mansion.

Dugdale has given the history of Charlecote and its lords with much minuteness. It is mentioned in Domesday Book; and its old Saxon name *Ceorlcote* — the home of the husbandman — carries us back to years before the Conquest. The present house was built in 1558 by Thomas Lucy, who in 1593 was knighted by Queen Elizabeth. It stands at a short distance from, and at some little elevation above, the river Avon. The building forms three sides of a quadrangle, the fourth being occupied by a handsome central gate-house, some distance in advance of the main building. The octangular turrets on each side, and the oriel window over the gate, are peculiar and pleasing features. The house retains its gables and angular towers, but has suffered from the introduction of the large and heavy sash-windows of the time of William III. or George I. In Thomas's edition of Dugdale's *Warwickshire*, published in 1730, there is an interesting "East prospect of Charlecote," drawn by H. Beighton in 1722, which gives a curious bird's-eye view of the entire house and gardens in their original state; that is, in the



CHARLCOTE, AS IT APPEARED, 1722.





INTERIOR OF THE HALL AT CHARLECOTE.

state in which Shakspeare would see them. A reduced copy of this view appears opposite. There is another view, shewing the back of the house from the river, preserved in the hall, and which appears to have been painted about the reign of James II. It shews the building to have been at that time precisely in the same condition; and as all modernisation has affected the interior principally, the exterior aspect is now much the same as it was in the days of the Poet.



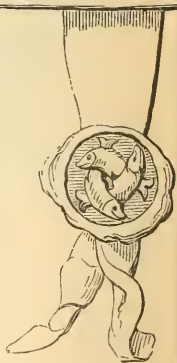
Passing through the old gate, we enter the court-yard, which, in place of the old fountain and circular tank of water, is now laid out in flower-beds. The hall is entered by a porch having the family arms and crest at each angle. We give a view of the interior as it is now. It has undergone alterations since Washington Irving thus described it in his *Sketch-book*: "The ceiling is arched and lofty; and at one end is a gallery, in which stands an organ [this has now been removed]. The weapons and tro-

phies of the chase, which formerly adorned the hall of a country gentleman, have made way for family portraits. There is a wide hospitable fireplace, calculated for an ample old fashioned wood fire, formerly the rallying place of winter festivity. On the opposite side of the hall is the huge Gothic bow-window with stone shafts, which looks out upon the court-yard. Here are emblazoned, in stained glass, the armorial bearings of the Lucy family for many generations, some being dated in 1558. I was delighted to observe in the quarterings the three white luces, by which the character of Sir Thomas was first identified with that of Justice Shallow."

The seal of Sir Thomas Lucy, here engraved, exhibits the three white luces interlaced. The autograph is written in a bold hand. Our cut is reduced to one-half the size of the original. The document from which it is obtained is in the possession of Mr. Wheler, of Stratford-on-Avon, and is appended to the presentation of the Rev. Richard Hill to the rectory of Hampton Lucy, in the gift of Sir Thomas, and is dated October 8th, 1586. Upon the vanes of the house at Charlecote, the three luces interlaced between cross crosslets are also displayed; an engraving of one of these vanes may be seen in Moule's *Heraldry of Fish*, p. 55, who says: "The pike of the fisherman is the *luce* of heraldry; a name derived from the old French language *lus*, or from the Latin *lucius*; as a charge it was very early used by heralds as a pun upon the name of Lucy."

Thomas

Lucy



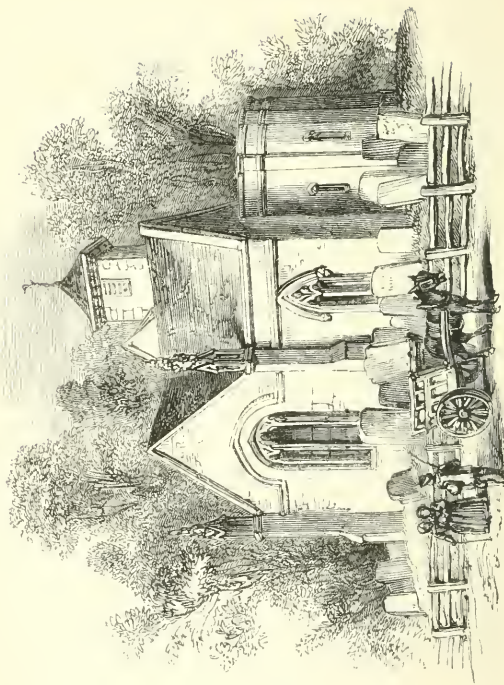
The deer-stealing story, unlike a matter of fact, has grown to be more defined and clear the nearer it approaches to our own time. It first commences by traditionary stories loosely put down, and exceedingly inaccurate in detail. Mention is made of a lost ballad satirising Sir Thomas. By and by, a stanza is found; and ultimately we get the entire ballad, about as scurrilous and worthless a composition as ever forger fixed on a great man. This ballad is evidently made up from the allusions in the first scene of the *Merry Wives of Windsor*, which, as Malone observes, "certainly afford ground for believing that our author, on some account or other, had not the most profound respect for Sir Thomas Lucy. The 'dozen white luces,' however, which *Shallow* is made to commend as 'a good coat,' was not Sir Thomas Lucy's coat of arms." Granting, however, that Shakspeare had in his youthful days mixed with "roysterers," which is far from unlikely, the offence of deer-stealing at that time was looked upon in a very different light from that in which we should now view it. The laxity of game-laws then, and the sympathy with which popular feeling regarded the act, re-echoed only the sentiments rendered popular by the constant singing of the Robin Hood ballads; and viewed such adventures much as we should regard the boyish robbing of an orchard. The plays and poems of the period abound with the expression of similar sentiments. In the play of *The Merry Devil of Edmonton*, mine Host and Sir John the Priest both join in the fun of deer-stealing; the Host declaring, "I'll have a buck till I die, I'll slay a doe while I live." Reputation was not lost by such outbreaks; and Shakspeare might have stolen a deer without any serious consequences. It is commonly related at the time as often done. Malone has quoted many passages to prove this; and in Reynolds' *Epigrammaticon*, 1642, occurs the following lines, which are conclusive:

“ Harry and I, in youth long since,
Did doughty deeds, but some nonsense :
We read our books, we sang our song,
We stole a deer, *who thought it wrong?*
To cut a purse deserves but hanging,
To steal a deer *deserves but banging.*”

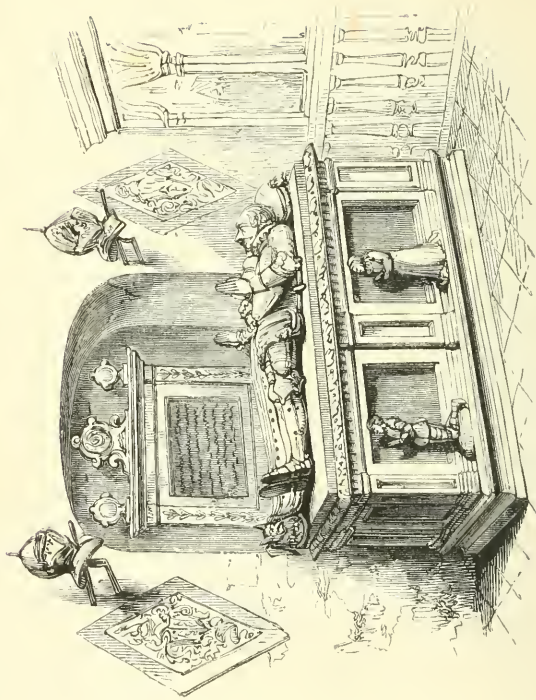
Shakspeare may therefore have stolen a deer; Sir Thomas may have treated the matter a little more seriously than was generally the wont with those who only judged of other's property; but the vindictiveness and ill-feeling of the whole story is the invention of more modern times. Sir Thomas appears to have been an exemplary country gentleman. He died Aug. 18, 1600, and is buried in Charlecote Church, a short distance from the family seat. His effigy, and that of his wife, are sculptured there. They are executed in a masterly manner, and may be



considered as careful portraits. That of the knight has been



CHARLECOTE CHURCH.



TOMB OF SIR THOMAS LUCY IN CHARLECOTE CHURCH.

given by Ireland, but his copy has no resemblance to the original. The cut here engraved is a more careful copy of a finer head than any Justice Shallow could shew. That Sir Thomas had an equally fine heart, the epitaph on the black slab in the recess at the back of the tomb will shew. With singular good taste his own name is not mentioned; but his wife's virtues are recorded in the following touching and beautiful inscription:—

HERE ENTOMBED LYETH THE LADY JOYCE LUCY, WIFE OF SIR THOMAS LUCY, OF CHERLECOTE, IN THE COUNTY OF WARWICK, KNIGHT, DAUGHTER AND HEIR OF THOMAS ACTON, OF SUTTON, IN THE COUNTY OF WORCESTER, ESQUIER, WHO DEPARTED OUT OF THIS WRETCHED WORLD TO HER HEAVENLY KINGDOME, THE TENTH DAY OF FEBRUARY, IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD GOD 1595, OF HER AGE LX. AND THREE. ALL THE TIME OF HER LIFE A TRUE AND FAITHFULL SERVANT OF HER GOOD GOD, NEVER DETECTED OF ANY CRIME OR VICE; IN RELIGION MOST SOUND; IN LOVE TO HER HUSBAND MOST FAITHFULL AND TRUE; IN FRIENDSHIP MOST CONSTANT; TO WHAT WAS IN TRUST COMMITTED TO HER MOST SECRET; IN WISDOME EXCELLING; IN GOVERNING OF HER HOUSE, AND BRINGING UP OF YOUTH IN THE FEARE OF GOD THAT DID CONVERSE WITH HER, MOST RARE AND SINGULAR. A GREAT MAINTAINER OF HOSPITALITY; GREATLY ESTEEMED OF HER BETTERS; MISLIKED OF NONE UNLESS OF THE ENVIOUS. WHEN ALL IS SPOKEN THAT CAN BE SAID, A WOMAN SO FURNISHED AND GARNISHED WITH VIRTUE, AS NOT TO BE BETTERED, AND HARDLY TO BE EQUALLED BY ANY. AS SHE LIVED MOST VIRTUOUSLY, SO SHE DYED MOST GODLY. SET DOWN BY HIM THAT BEST DID KNOW WHAT HATH BEEN WRITTEN TO BE TRUE.

THOMAS LUCY.

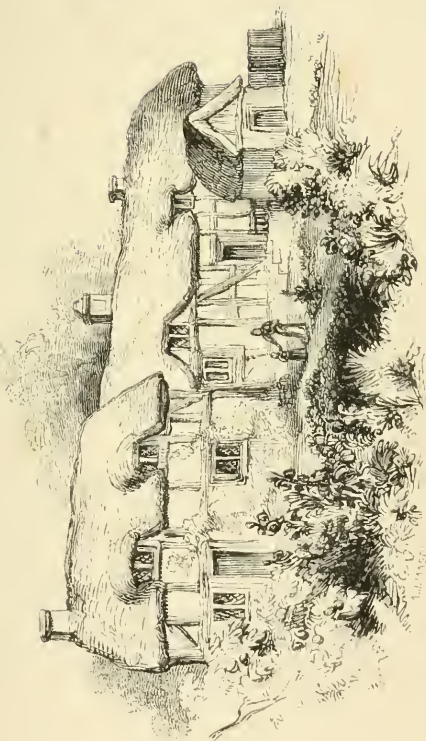
Respected be the memory of Sir Thomas! A boyish outbreak, if rebuked harshly in a moment of irritability, was, we

are sure, forgiven and forgotten by Shakspeare, whom we know to have been in friendly communication with the family afterwards. The dignity of a great man's biography should not be broken up by such tales. This deer-stealing story has even become more firmly fixed in an adjoining locality, where we are certain it could not be true. Fulbrooke Park is made the scene of the exploit, and Ireland engraves the keeper's lodge there, in which Shakspeare was confined when caught in his lawlessness. The deer-barn at the same place, where Shakspeare concealed the venison he stole, is also shewn. Mr. Knight, to whom belongs the merit of investigating clearly the whole of this deer-stealing story, says, "A word or two disposes of this part of this tradition: Fulbrooke Park did not come into the possession of the Lucy family till the grandson of Sir Thomas purchased it in the reign of James I.!"

Passing from all unpleasant reminiscences of Shakspeare's residence at Stratford, let us take a quiet walk by the field-path that leads to

ANNE HATHAWAY'S COTTAGE.

By this footway the Poet must have often wandered in the evening to his "lady-love." It is a pleasant walk—a short mile from Stratford. Quiet and luxuriant is the landscape which meets the eye all around: corn-fields, and pasture-land, and snug farms; the quiet, old-fashioned gables of Shottery before; the wood-embosomed houses of Stratford behind; where from among the trees shoots up the elegant spire of one of the most beautiful of our country churches. Shottery abounds with old half-timbered houses; and one, now a little road-side inn, called "The Shakspeare," is a capital example, and stands beside the field-path at the commencement of the lane leading to Anne's house. Proceeding down this lane, we cross a brook; a few yards farther, and we reach the house. It is a long thatched tenement of



ANNE HATHAWAY'S COTTAGE, FROM THE GARDEN.



timber and plaster, substantially built upon a foundation of squared slabs of lias shale, which is a characteristic of the Warwickshire cottages, and is seen in Shakspeare's birthplace, as already noted. On looking up at the central chimney, the spectator may be startled at the date which is here engraved. It is cut on stone, and let into the bricks; and simply records the reparation of the house by John Hathaway, who appears to have done much for its comforts, as we shall see.



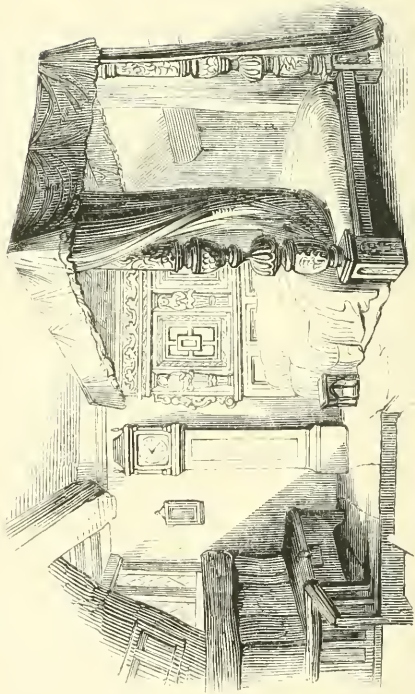
But the house itself has come in for a share of the doubts which have succeeded the credulity of past times, and it has been declared not to be Anne's father's. Mr. Knight has sifted the evidence, and triumphantly disproved the doubt. John Hathaway held property at Shottery in 1543. Richard Hathaway, the father of Anne, was intimate with Shakspeare's father, for the latter stood as his bondman in an action at law dated 1576. There is no doubt that the Hathaways held the house here long before; the *purchase* was, however, only effected in 1606. That Anne should be described as "of Stratford" in the marriage-bond is not singular: Shottery is but a hamlet of the parish of Stratford.

This house, like Shakspeare's birthplace, is subdivided into three tenements. By referring to our engraving of the exterior from the garden, this will be most clearly understood. The square, compact, and taller half of the building to the reader's left forms one house. The other two are divided by the passage, which runs entirely through the lower half, from the door in front, to which the steps lead, to that seen close to the railings in our back view. This passage serves for both tenements. That to the right on entering consists of one large room below, with a chimney extending the whole width of the house, with an oven and boiler; shewing that this was the principal kitchen

when the house was all in one. The door to the left leads into the parlour, which is here engraved. It is a large, low-roofed

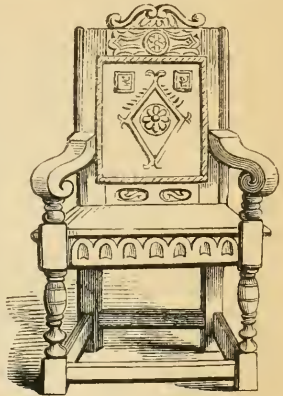


room, ceiled with strong beams of timber, and much resembling the kitchen of Shakspeare's birthplace. A "bacon cupboard" of similar construction, is also on the left side of the fire-place, upon the transverse bar of which is cut "IH · EH · IB · 1697," the initials of John Hathaway, his wife Anne, and, it may be, the maker of the door, which has been cut ornamentally. The first two initials and the date are the same as upon the large chimney, which belongs to this room, and which has been already noticed. Upon an old table beneath the window, "M · H" is carved; all indicative of the proprietors. Mr. Knight says: "The Shottery property, which was called Hewland, remained with the descendants of the Hathaways till 1838." The present resident in this central tenement is the granddaughter of John Hathaway Taylor; a relative, whose Bible, dated 1776, still lies on the dresser. He was a man who cared little for relics, or the associations connected with the house, which was then seldom visited. The furniture, and a full service of antique pewter, which had garnished the dresser for many years, in his time



BED-ROOM IN ANNE HATHAWAY'S COTTAGE.

disappeared. When Ireland visited this cottage in 1792 he speaks of the descendants of the family as "poor and numerous;" and at this time he saw and purchased an old oak chair, which he has engraved in his *Picturesque Views on the Avon*, and which is here copied. He says it was called "Shakspeare's courting chair." With a similar desire to please relic-lovers to that which has been already shewn to have once existed in Shakspeare's birthplace concerning the chair there, this chair, although long since gone, has a successor dignified by the same name, in an old settle in the passage through the house, and which has but one old bit of wood, the seat, in it. It is but fair to add, that those who are sceptical are not met by bold assertions of its genuineness, although there be no denial of its possible claim to that quality; but all credulous and believing persons are allowed the full benefit of their faith. In addition to Shakspeare's chair, Ireland was shewn "a purse which had been likewise his, and handed down from him to his granddaughter Lady Barnard, and from her to the Hathaway family" then existing. At the time of the Stratford Jubilee, George, the brother of David Garrick, purchased from the old lady who then lived here an inkstand and a pair of fringed gloves, said to have been worn by Shakspeare. David, with his usual carefulness, purchased no such doubtful ware.



The bed-room over this parlour is ascended by a ladder-like stair; and here stands an old carved bedstead, certainly as old as the Shaksperian era. It is elaborately and tastefully exe-

cuted, and has been handed down as an heir-loom with the house. In Ireland's time, the old woman of the house, who was then upwards of seventy, declared that she had slept in the bed from her childhood, and was always told it had been there ever since the house was built. Whether there in Anne's time, or brought there since, it is ancient enough for her or her family to have slept in, and adds an interest to the quaint bed-room in the roof. In a chest beside it is a pillow-case and sheet, marked "E. H.," and ornamented with open-work down the centre; they are of home-spun fabric, the work of "the spinster" when single country girls earned the name.

The back-view of the house is more picturesque than the front one. The ground rises from the road to a level with the back-door. Tall trees overshadow it, and a rustic stile beside them leads into a meadow, where stand some cottages as old as the home of the Hathaways. There is much to interest the student-lover of the old rural life of England in Shotton.

From the period of Shakspeare's marriage to that of his retirement from London, there is nothing to connect him with Stratford and its neighbourhood. We must look elsewhere. But with the natural love of a true-hearted man, we find that he made his native town *the home* he visited whenever he had the opportunity, and chose for his place of retirement when the busy metropolitan duties he had fulfilled ensured him competence. In

NEW PLACE,

the house he had purchased at the early age of 33, he died at that of 52. "He was wont to go to his native country once a year," says Aubrey; and he had so intimately connected himself with Stratford by the purchase of property and other things, that his mind was evidently fixed on that town with an endearing affection through life, and which led him to look towards it

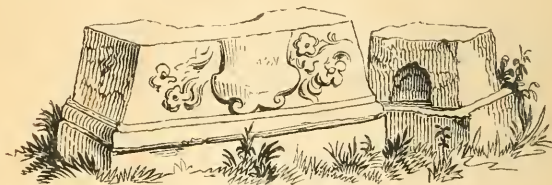


ANNE HATHAWAY'S COTTAGE — BACK VIEW.

as his resting-place. New Place, we are informed by Dugdale was originally erected by Sir Hugh Clopton, temp. Henry VII. It was, he says, "a fair house, built of brick and timber." It was sold to the Underhill family, and was purchased from them by Shakspeare in 1597, who having repaired and modelled it to his own mind, changed the name to New Place, which it retained until its demolition. Shakspeare, by his will, gave it to his daughter, Mrs. Hall, for her life, and then to her daughter Elizabeth, afterwards Lady Barnard. On her death it was sold to Sir Edward Walker, whose only daughter marrying Sir John Clopton, it again came into the hands of its ancient possessors. Sir John gave it to his younger son, Sir Hugh, who resided in it during the latter part of his life, and died there in Dec. 1751. By him the mansion was repaired, and a modern front built to it; and here, in 1742, he entertained Macklin, Garrick, and Dr. Delany, beneath the mulberry-tree which Shakspeare had planted in the garden. By Sir Hugh's son-in-law the mansion was sold, in 1753, to the Rev. F. Gastrell, a man of unhappy temper, who being annoyed by visitors requesting to see the mulberry-tree, ruthlessly cut it down in 1756, to save himself the trouble of shewing it. This rendered him exceedingly unpopular in the town, and he resided there but seldom; but the house being rated as if he had constantly lived there, in a fit of ill humour he declared that *that* house should never be assessed again,—he pulled it down, sold the materials, and left the town universally execrated.

There are no views of the house as it was in Shakspeare's time. The view engraved so frequently is an imposition. Malone first published it, "from an ancient survey," in which it is not stated to represent New Place, or any other place in particular. He ordered the discoverer of this survey, Mr. Jordan of Stratford, to add the arms of Shakspeare over the door, because "they were likely to have been there!" and to add "neat

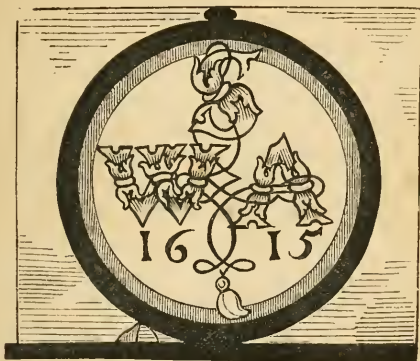
wooden pales" in front. To which liberal direction Jordan added the porch! and so originated this authentic picture. A view of New Place, as altered by Sir Hugh Clopton, and as it appeared previous to its demolition, may be seen in Mr. R. B. Wheler's "History of Stratford-on-Avon." Not a feature of the ancient Shaksperian residence had then been suffered to remain.



In the garden of Mr. Hunt, to whose family Mrs. Gastrell sold the site of New Place in 1775, are two fragments of the house. One is a stone lintel; the other, a portion of sculpture, in stone also, which may have been placed over a door. It is ornamented with a shield, but the bearings cannot now be distinguished, owing to decay. On each side are groups of flowers, also much injured by time.

It is traditionally reported that the White Lion Inn was built from the materials of New Place. The panelling of an entire room was fitted up in the parlour of the Falcon Inn opposite, where it still remains. It exhibits a series of square sunk panels, covering the entire walls, the upper row being elongated, with a plain cornice and dentels above. From the similarity of the panel and cornice upon which the portrait of Shakspeare is painted, already spoken of as standing in his birth-room, and the tradition that it was brought from the White Lion Inn, it may have been also a part of the decoration of New Place when it was last "repaired and beautified."

There is another and an apparently genuine relic of New Place at present in the possession of the Court family, who own Shakspeare's house. It is a square of glass, measuring 9 inches by 7, in which a circular piece is leaded, having the letters



“W. A. S.,” for William and Ann Shakspeare, tied in “a true lover’s knot,” and the date, 1615, the year before the Poet’s death, beneath. A relative of the late Mrs. Court, whose ancestor had been employed to pull down New Place, had saved this square of glass, but attached little value to it. He gave it to her, but she had an honest dislike to the many pretenders to relics, and never shewed this glass unless it was expressly requested by the few who had heard of it. She told her story simply, made no comments, and urged no belief. The letters and figures are certainly characteristic: they are painted in dark brown outline, tinted with yellow; the border is also yellow. The lead is decayed, and the glass loose. It altogether appears to be as genuine a relic as any that have been offered. It has not been engraved before.

We have now but to visit

THE TOMB OF SHAKSPERE

in the chancel of the beautiful church of Stratford. It is placed against a blank window, on the left of the spectator, as he faces the altar. How soon it was erected after the Poet's death, we cannot confidently say; but that it was before 1623 we can ascertain from Leonard Digges's verses prefixed to the first edition of the Poet's works. A half-length figure of him is placed in a niche, above is his arms; on each side of which are seated cherubs, one holding an inverted torch, with a skull beside him, the other a spade; on the apex above is another skull. Beneath the cushion upon which the Poet is writing is inscribed:

JVDICIO PYLIVM, GENIO SOCRATEM, ARTE MARONEM,
TERRA TEGIT, POPVLVS MÆRET, OLYMPVS HABET.

STAY, PASSENGER; WHY GOEST THOV BY SO FAST?
READ, IF THOV CANST, WHOM ENVIOWS DEATH HATH PLAST
WITHIN THIS MONVMENT: SHAKSPEARE, WITH WHOME
QUICKE NATVRE DIDE; WHOSE NAME DOTH DECK YS. TOMBE
FAR MORE THEN COST; SITH ALL YT. HE HATH WRITT
LEAVES LIVING ART BVT PAGE TO SERVE HIS WITT.

Obiit. Ano. Doi. 1616.
Ætatis 53. Die 23. Ap.

The half-length effigy of Shakspeare was originally painted after nature. The eyes were a light hazel; the hair and beard auburn. The dress was a scarlet doublet slashed on the breast, over which was a loose black gown without sleeves. The upper part of the cushion was crimson, the lower green; the cord which bound it and the tassels were gilt. John Ward, grandfather of the Kembles, caused the tomb to be repaired and the original colours restored in 1748, from the profits of the performance of

Othello. In 1793, Malone, in an evil hour, gained permission to paint it white; and also the effigy of Shakspeare's friend, John Combe, who lies beside the altar. Mr. Knight has most justly stigmatised this act as one of "unscrupulous insolence." Certainly Malone was at much pains to write himself down an ass.

We learn from Dugdale's correspondence, that the sculptor of this monument was Gerard Johnson. His work has been subjected to much criticism, particularly by such as are anxious to have Shakspeare not only a great poet, but a handsome man. This bust does not please them. Mr. Skottowe declares that it "is not only at variance with the tradition of Shakspeare's appearance having been prepossessing, but irreconcilable with the belief of its ever having borne a striking resemblance to any human being." A most sweeping conclusion, against which most modern authors and artists have arrayed themselves. It is a curious fact that Martin Droeshout's portrait prefixed to the folio of 1623, and beneath which Ben Jonson has affixed verses attesting its accuracy, and which all his "fellows" who aided in this edition as well as others who knew and loved the man could also confirm, bears a decided similarity to this bust. Marshall seems to have depended on the same authority for the portrait he engraved for the edition of Shakspeare's poems in 1640. All agree in one striking feature; the noble forehead and quiet unostentatious kindly expression of feature which must have belonged to "the gentle Shakspeare." These early artists appear to have been literal copyists, and the bust at Stratford is the best, and I incline to think the only authority to be depended on. It was probably cut from a cast taken after death; and it is remarkable that it stands as good test phrenologically as if it had been adapted to the Poet—a singular instance of its truth. Another corroborative proof exists in what has been objected to as inaccurate, the length of the upper lip; but Sir Walter Scott, whose

intellect most nearly approached the Poet, had the same feature and the same commanding head. The ghastly white paint upon the bust, the high position it occupies in the church, and the bad light that there falls on it, hinders the due appreciation of its merits. The features are regular, nay, handsome and intelligent; but it is evident that such a head depended on its living expression, and that then it must have been eminently gentle and prepossessing. The lower part of the face, though inclined to be fleshy, does not injure the features, which are all delicately formed, and the side-view of the head is very fine; a careful copy adorns our title-page. An intent study of this bust enforces the belief, that all the manifold peculiarities of feature so characteristic of the Poet, and which no *chance* could have originated, and no theory account for, must have resulted from its being a transcript of the Man; one that has received the confirmation of his own living relatives and friends, the best and only portrait to be now relied on.

The gravestones of the Shakspere family lie in a row in front of the altar-rails, upon the second step leading to it. His wife's is immediately beneath his tomb. It is a flat stone, the surface injured by time, having a small brass plate let in it with this inscription: here given literally, as are all the other inscriptions. They have been incorrectly printed in most instances.

HEERE LYETH INTERRED THE BODY OF ANNE WIFE
OF WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE. WHO DEPTED THIS LIFE THE
6 DAY OF AVG : 1623. BEING OF THE AGE OF 67 YEARES :

Vbera tu mater, tu lac vitamq; dedisti,
Væ mihi pro tanto munere Saxa dabo,
Quam mallet amoveat lapidem bonus Angel' ore'
Exeat Christi corpus imago tua;
Sed nil vota valent, venias cito Christe, resurget,
Clausula licet tumulo mater, et astra petet.

Next comes that placed over the body of the Poet. It is



HEERE LYETH Y^E BODY OF SVSANNA
WIFE TO JOHN HALL GENT: Y^E DAVGH
TER OF WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE, GENT:
SHEE DECEASED Y^E 11th OF JVLV. A^O.
1649. AGED • 66.

Witty above her sexe, but that's not all.
Wise to Salvation was good Mistris Hall,
Something of Shakespeare was in that, but this
Wholy of him with whom she's now in blisse.

Then, Passenger, ha't ne're a teare,
To weepe with her that wept with all?
That weps, yet set herself to chere
Them up with comforts cordiall.
Her love shall live, her mercy spread,
When thou ha't ne're a teare to shed.



HEERE LYETH Y^E BODY OF JOHN HALL,
GENT: HE MARR: SVSANNA, Y^E DAVGH-
TER, OF WILL. SHAKESPEARE, GENT. HER
DECEASED NOVBER 25. A^O. 1635. AGED 60.

Hallius hic situs est medica celeberrimus arte,
Expectatus regni gaudia leta Dei.
Dignus erat meritis qui Nestora vinceret annis,
In terris omnes, sed rapit aqua dies;
Ne tumulo, quid desit adest fidissima conjux,
Et vitæ Commitem nunc quoq; mortis habet.



HEERE RESTETH Y^E BODY OF TROMAS
NASHE, ESQ. HE. MAR. ELIZABETH, THE
DAVG: & HEIRE OF JOHN HALL, GENT.
HE DIED APRILL. 4. A. 1647. AGED. 53.

Fara manent omnes, hunc non virtute carentem
vt neq; diuinus abstulit atra dies.
Abtulit, et referet lux ultima, siste viator,
si peritura paras, per male parata peris.

GOOD FREND FOR IESVS SAKE FORBEARE,
TO DIGG THE DVST ENCLOSED HEARE:
BLESTE BE Y^E MAN Y^E SPARES THESE STONES,
AND CVRST BE HR^E MOVES MY BONES.

GRAVESTONES OF THE SHAKSPERE FAMILY.

right here to state that the four lines upon it have been generally printed with an absurd mixture of great and small letters: it is here carefully reduced from a rubbing taken on the stone. The only peculiarity it possesses over ordinary inscriptions is the

GOOD FRENDE FOR IESVS SAKE FORBEARE,
 TO DIGG THE DVST ENCLOSED HEARE:
 BLESSE BE ^EY MAN ^TY SPARES THES STONES,
 AND CVRST BE HE ^TY MOVES MY BONES.

abbreviation for the word *that*, and the grouping together of some of the letters after the fashion of a monogram. Other instances of similar usages are common in inscriptions of the same age. There is a traditionary story, bearing date 1693, which says, "His wife and daughters did earnestly desire to be laid in the same grave with him," but that "not one for fear of the curse above said dare touch his gravestone."

Next to that of Shakspeare lies a stone commemorating the resting-place of Thomas Nash, who married the only daughter of the Poet's daughter Susanna; this lady afterwards married Sir John Barnard, and died at Abington, near Northampton, in 1670, in whom the direct line of the Poet's issue ceased. Dr. John Hall, her father, lies next; and last comes Susanna, his wife. The whole of the rhyming part of her epitaph had been obliterated, and upon the place was cut an inscription to the memory of one Richard Watts. This has in its turn been erased, and the original inscription restored by lowering the surface of the stone and recutting the letters. The tombs of Hall and Nash have also been renovated by deepening the letters and recutting the armorial bearings, which has been done under the judicious and careful superintendence of R. B. Wheler, Esq., of Stratford,

at the sole expense of the Rev. W. Harness, whose public-spirited and honourable act deserves as much praise as Malone's miserable meddling does reprobation.

Such are the relics, genuine and supposititious, and the localities which connect themselves with the history of "the world's Poet" at Stratford. It has been the object of the author of this unpretending hand-book to collect, engrave, and describe *all* that could be found, and which no work of greater pretensions has yet done so completely. The drawings have all been placed upon the wood by his own hand, and engraved under his superintendence. Several visits to Stratford have enabled him to obtain many drawings and many facts of a local character not elsewhere set down. In this world of change and fancied improvement such records may be useful, particularly when they are connected with one who has most honoured his native land by his writings, and of whom Englishmen have most reason to be proud!

"Triumph, my Britain! thou hast one to shew,
To whom all scenes of Europe homage owe.
He was not of an age, but for all time;
And all the Muses still were in their prime,
When, like Apollo, he came forth to warm
Our ears, or like a Mercury to charm.
Nature herself was proud of his designs,
And joy'd to wear the dressing of his lines."

B. JONSON.

THE END.

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